



Media Advisory

Office of Vice Mayor Dave Cortese

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Santa Clara Valley's Father of Flight to be commemorated through art and inscription

San Jose, CA – Vice Mayor Cortese, the City of San José and members of the community will cut the ribbon on a 30-foot high artist's rendering of a glider wing on Saturday, March 15th in the Evergreen part of San José, in commemoration of John J. Montgomery, a notable pioneer in the field of avionics.

Montgomery designed, built and flew gliders (glider names include the 1883 Gull, 1905 Santa Clara and the 1911 Evergreen) and undertook several flights in his legendary wing gliders launched from balloons in Evergreen. He is credited with making the first manned, controlled, heavier-than-air flights in the United States and was issued a U.S. patent in 1906 for his invention of an "aeroplane."

Various institutions around the valley and throughout the nation have paid homage to this Father of Flight. Three of Montgomery's gliders are permanently at the Hiller Aviation Museum. An obelisk commemorating his work sits among grassy fields at Santa Clara University, where Montgomery was an alumnus and professor of physics (back when the University was called Santa Clara College). Various other tributes to his life and work are on display in New York, San Diego and Dayton, OH.

"Innovation has long been of part of this valley," said Cortese, who as a boy enjoyed watching the theater of crop dusters and small craft take off and land at Reid Hillview Airport, adding, "From agriculture to avionics to nanotechnology, Santa Clara Valley is verdant with pioneering ideas and influences."

Saturday's grand opening will be co-hosted by several organizations dedicated to history and avionics including the City of San José (Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Office of Cultural Affairs), Santa Clara Valley 99s, the San Jose Mineta International Airport, Santa Clara University, the Tech Museum of Innovation, and many other important partners. For more information, please contact the District 8 Council Office at (408) 535-4908.